

# Communication Link 4.0

## User Manual

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## INSTALLING COMMUNICATION LINK 4.0

**Important Note!** Communication Link 4.0 is not compatible with previous versions of Fire Studio or Communication Link 3.0. You cannot control installations of Fire Studio 3.0 with this version of CommLink. It is not necessary to uninstall previous versions of Fire Studio or CommLink, but version 4 should **not** be installed into the same directory as any other version you currently have on your system.

### Trial Mode or Serial Activation

During initial setup and launch of the software, you will be given the choice to run the software in Trial Mode or to enter a Serial Number. Trial Mode can be used to test the software for a set period of time, but once you have purchased a license and receive a serial number, you should enter that number when prompted. Be sure to have a working internet connection at the time to complete the installation.

The installation program **Setup.exe** installs **CommLink 4**.

1. Insert the CommLink 4 CD into your CD drive.
2. Right click on the Windows *Start* button, located at the bottom left of the desktop.
3. Choose *Open*.
4. Select *My Computer* in the *Other Places* window on the left.
5. Right-click on the CD drive with CommLink 4.
6. Choose *Open*.
7. Double-click on the **Setup.exe** file to launch the application and begin unpacking the files. This procedure takes the most time during installation. Do not cancel the installation unless the progress bar does not move for more than 30 minutes.
8. When it is finished unpacking, you will arrive at the **Installshield Wizard**. Choose *Next*.
9. Read the license and choose *Accept* if you accept the terms. If you do not accept the terms of the license, please abort installation now.
10. Click *Next* to proceed.
11. Please enter your name and organization. This does not restrict who gets access to the program, it is merely for registration purposes.
12. Choose if you want to install the program for just you or all users on the computer and click *Next*.
13. Choose the directory where the program will be installed.
14. Click next to proceed to the **Ready to Install** page.
15. Click on *Install* to begin installation.
16. When installation is complete, the **DirectX** license will appear. **DirectX** is required to run CommLink 4. Chances are, you have some version of **DirectX** already installed. If your version is outdated, this will install the **DirectX 9c** drivers. If your **DirectX** is newer, it will not overwrite them, so please read the license agreement and tag the *Accept* bubble if you agree. *If the DirectX license does not appear, please refer to notation following installation instructions.*
17. Click on *Next* to proceed.
18. Click *Next* again to begin installation.
19. Click *Finish* to end **DirectX** installation.

20. Commlink 4 is now installed on your system. You can find the Commlink 4 icon on your desktop, or in your Windows menu under *Digital Combustion*.

**If the DirectX installation windows did not appear...**

**Or if you receive an error message saying a DirectX dll file cannot be found**

You will need to install it manually. To do so, navigate to the *Commlink 4\Dev\DirectX9* folder using Windows Explorer® and double-click on the *DXSETUP* file. This will initiate the DirectX9 installer. Once it has been installed, you may run Commlink 4.

## STARTING COMMUNICATION LINK 4.0

Double-click on the Commlink icon located either on your desktop or directly within the folder in which you installed the software.

Communication Link will launch, presenting a window that looks like the picture below.

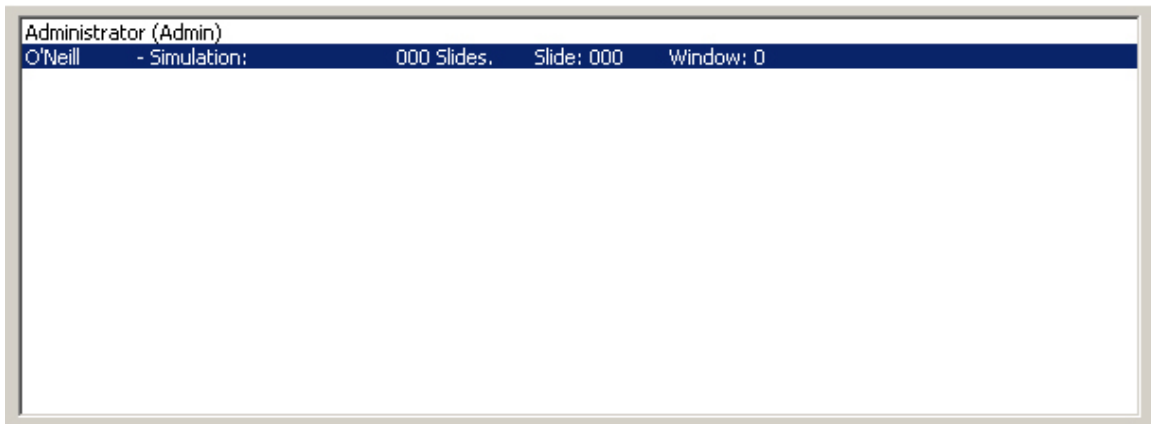


The two fields will have default values listed, so enter your own values here.

**Commlink Operator Name** refers to the name you will be known by from within Commlink. Messages written by you will have this name placed by it. The name must be unique so users will easily recognize it. Last names work well, sometimes preceded by rank; for example, CaptSmith. **Room Name** designates a name for the virtual training room. It is possible for multiple Commlinks to operate on the same network, so each would need a unique room name in order to separate the training exercises. Any name is fine-- you could even use a room number if you wanted. Click *OK* to create the Commlink room and establish the server.

## UNDERSTANDING THE COMMUNICATION LINK INTERFACE

### The Top Window (Connected Users)



This window displays all of the users in the virtual room: all of the people connected to Communication Link. At the top is the instructor connected locally and below will be a list of everyone else connected.

Except for the local connection (the instructor using Communication Link), all of the users have 5 fields for their entry: **Name**, **Simulation**, **# of Slides**, **Current Slide #**, and **Current Window**.

<b>Name</b>	:	The user's name.
<b>Simulation</b>	:	Name of the simulation the user has loaded.
<b># of Slides</b>	:	Number of slides in the loaded simulation.
<b>Current Slide #</b>	:	The slide number that the user is currently viewing. This will be a number from 1 to # of Slides (previous field).
<b>Current Window</b>	:	The window number that the user is currently viewing. This will be a number from 1 to 4 corresponding to the four windows in Fire Studio 4.0.

You can select a user to control by clicking on their entry in this window. When selected, the entry will be highlighted in blue.

### Refresh Data Button

Although this button is grouped with the Middle Window, it corresponds to the information appearing in the Top Window as well. Clicking on this button will update all of the information explained above, in both the Top and Middle Windows. Communication Link does not keep a constant update automatically, so use this button frequently to keep the information current.

## The Middle Window (Groups)

In this window you can manage groups, assigning or removing users from them. Here are the tasks you can accomplish in this window:

### Select a Group

At the bottom of the window are entries for nine groups. A tagged label with a mark in the circle represents the group you are currently viewing. In the picture above, Group1 is currently being viewed. The group name will also be shown in the field at the top: *Group Name*. You can select a group by simply clicking on the circle next to the group you want to view.

### Name a Group

In Commlink 4.0, you can name any or all of the nine groups. To do so, click once in the field to the right of Group Name. You can then type in whatever name you want for the group. Sometimes it is useful to have a group name that reflects what simulation or view of an incident the members are looking at.

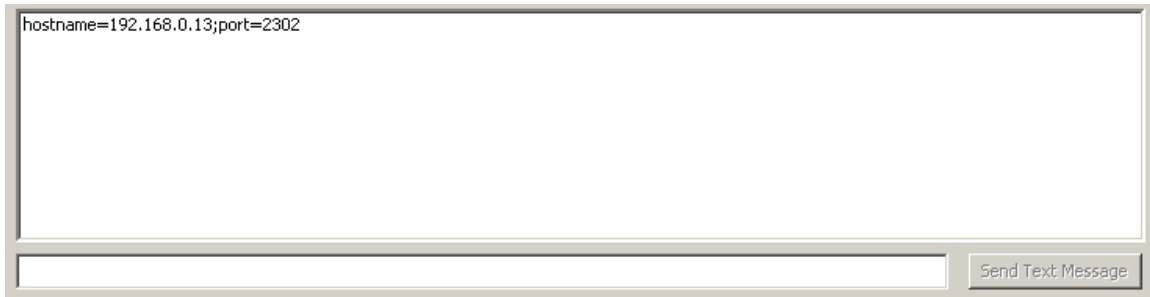
### Add a User to a Group

To make someone a member of a group, first select the group you want to add them to, and then select the user you want to add from the top window. Now click on the Add User button. They now become a part of that group. Later in the manual we will talk about the things you can do with groups.

### Remove a User from a Group

If you want to remove someone from a group, click on their entry in the middle window so that they are selected, and then click on the Remove User button. That member will be removed from the group.

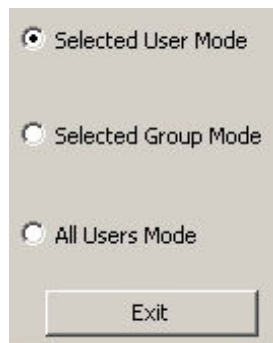
## The Bottom Window (Chat Box)



The bottom window is where you will send and receive text messages from the people connected to Commlink. You can also find out your local machine's IP address and port here. Finally, any error messages that Communication Link reports will be displayed here.

### Send Text Message

Sending a text message in Commlink is similar to most other chat software you may have used on the internet, with a few added parameters. On the bottom-right of the Commlink interface is a series of three options as seen in the picture below. These selections will affect who receives the messages you type, as well as the users you will control (we'll talk about that later in the manual). Before typing and sending your message, choose the selection that is appropriate.



- |                            |   |   |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Selected User Mode</b>  | : | Messages will be sent to the current user you have selected.  |
| <b>Selected Group Mode</b> | : | Messages will be sent to the current group you have selected. |
| <b>All Users Mode</b>      | : | Messages will be sent to all users connected to Commlink.     |

In the single row at the bottom of the window, left click the mouse cursor to ensure you have a cursor and type in your message. When you click Send Text Message, your written text will be sent to the all users or to the user or group you currently

have selected. Your own messages (as well as any coming from another user) will be shown in the main box.

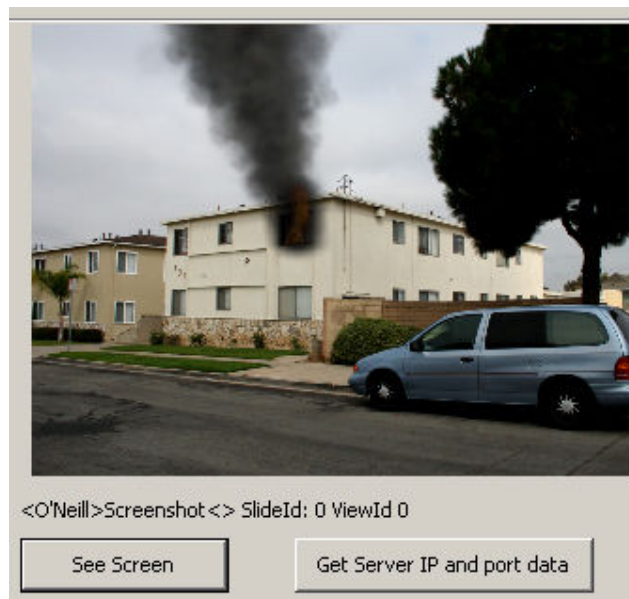
### Acquiring IP & Port Info

Click on the Get Server IP and Port Data button on the right side of the Commlink interface to get a readout of the Commlink IP address and port number. This information will appear in the Bottom Window where text or error messages are normally displayed.

Get Server IP & Port

### Viewing Fire Studio Windows from Communication Link

On the top-right of Commlink is a window that will display a screenshot of a user's window in Fire Studio 4. When you first load the program, the window will be all black. However, this will change according to various actions you take within Commlink. The following picture shows an example of a screenshot take from a connected user:



### Acquiring the Screenshot

You can only get a screenshot from one user at a time. That means, only the selected user's screen will be displayed. With a user selected, click on the See Screen button to get a screenshot of what the user is currently viewing.

With the screenshot, you will also be given information that describes the picture. In the sample above, you can see the following text just below the image:

<O'Neill>Screenshot<>SlideId: 0 ViewId 0

The first portion, <O'Neill> shows the user name of the connection where the screenshot originated. SlideId: 0 and ViewId 0 shows the slide and window number, respectively.

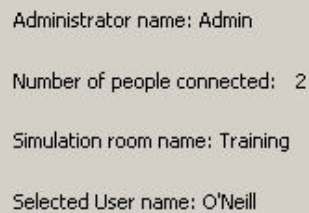
Note: If the Screenshot does not appear when you click the See Screen button, please ensure you have Read/Write Permission to the 'C:\Program Files\Digital Combustion, Inc\Fire Studio 4.0 Communication Link' folder and all subfolders within.

## Multiple View Limitations

The screenshot in Commlink 4.0 will only show a picture of one window; it cannot show all 4 windows, even if the user is in 4-view or multiple view mode. Looking at it another way, the screenshot will always be of the active window. In single view mode, the window in view is obviously active (it's the ONLY window in view). In the case of multiple view, the one highlighted in red on the Fire Studio machine will be the one to display here. Please refer to the Fire Studio 4.0 User Manual for information about single and multiple view.

## General Commlink Information Display

Under the See Screen button are several properties regarding the current Commlink connection.

A screenshot of a grey rectangular box containing four lines of text. The first line is 'Administrator name: Admin', the second is 'Number of people connected: 2', the third is 'Simulation room name: Training', and the fourth is 'Selected User name: O'Neill'.

<b>Administrator name</b>	:	The name you entered in the User Name field when launching Communication Link 4.
<b>Number of people connected</b>	:	Shows how many connections are currently made with Commlink, including the Commlink operator.
<b>Simulation room name</b>	:	Shows the name of the virtual training room. This is the name you entered when starting Commlink and the name the other users need to enter in Room Name when starting Fire Studio 4.
<b>Selected User name</b>	:	Shows the user name for the user you currently have selected.



## Controlling Fire Studio from Communication Link

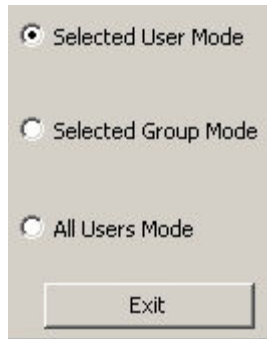
Manipulation of Fire Studio 4 from the Commlink computer will be handled with the following controls:



The image shows a control panel with a button labeled 'Set Simulation Data'. To its right are two input fields. The first is labeled 'Slide ID:' and contains the number '1'. It has left and right arrow buttons. The second is labeled 'Window ID:' and also contains the number '1'.

- Set Simulation Data** : Clicking this button will assign the Slide ID and Window ID settings *that you have entered manually*. In other words, if you click in the field and type in a number, you will need to click Set Simulation Data to actually implement the change.
- Slide ID** : This refers to the Slide number in the Simulation. Clicking on the arrows on either side of the text field will move the slide forward or back by 1 and automatically implement the change. If you need to skip to a specific slide, you can click on the field and enter the number directly. In this case, click the Set Simulation Data button to implement the change.
- Window ID** : This refers to the active window on the current slide. Each slide has 4 windows (regardless of whether there is an image in them or not), any of which can be made active. With the Fire Studio users in single view mode, they are only viewing one window at a time, meaning you can change what they see by changing the Window ID (and of course the Slide ID as well). The Window ID is always entered manually, so click on the field to type in a number (1-4) and then click on the Set Simulation Data button.

In addition, the settings on the bottom-right of the interface (previously discussed as used with text messages) will also need to be considered. These settings will determine which user's settings will be changed.



- |                            |   |   |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Selected User Mode</b>  | : | The currently selected user's settings will change. |
| <b>Selected Group Mode</b> | : | Settings to the current active Group will change.   |
| <b>All Users Mode</b>      | : | The settings for all connected users will change.   |

## CREATING AN INSTRUCTOR'S GUIDE

It is often handy to have a guide to your users' simulations when conducting training with Commlink. Although you can view screenshots of their simulation, you will probably want printed material to help you remember everything about it. You can make a guide as simple or complex as you like, but getting the simulation onto a Word® document is probably where you'll want to begin.

From section 11.4 of the Fire Studio 4.0 User Manual (screenshots are from Fire Studio 4.0 Instructor Edition):

- Fire Studio 4.0 allows you to export all of the windows in your simulation to an **HTML** file. Exported windows are still images, just as they would appear if you had done a screen capture. As an HTML file, you can open it using Internet Explorer® or other program, and then print the file using your printer to create a guide for your simulation.
- To print your simulation to an HTML file, load the simulation you want to print, and then click the *Print* button (figure 11.4a) located at the bottom right of the control panel. The HTML file will be created in the *Report* folder and the program you have associated with HTML files (usually Internet Explorer®) will automatically open the file for you to view. It will appear something like figure 11.4b.
- The layout of the HTML file places the windows for each slide in a row, with slide 1 on the top, followed by slide 2, and so on. Figure 11.4b shows the result from the single slide simulation, represented in figure 11.4c. The unused window 3 does not appear in the HTML file.

Figure 11.4a

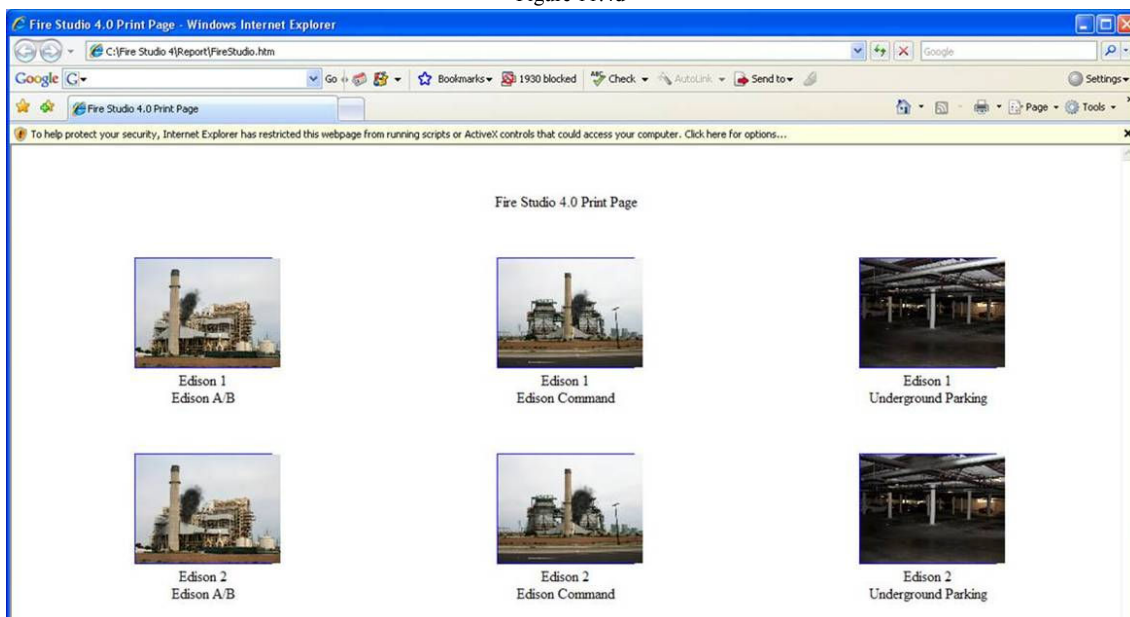


Figure 11.4c



- Only windows with backgrounds will be displayed. All of the images will be labeled according to the slide and window name. You will also be able to click on the pictures to open up a slightly larger image.

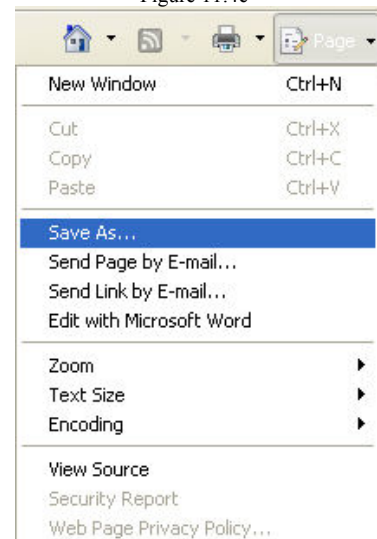
Figure 11.4d



- Figure 11.4d demonstrates a 2-slide HTML file, with an additional slide added to our first example. Again, only the three used windows are shown. In this example, we have kept the window names the same in both slides, but feel free to change them with your own simulations.
- At this point, you can print the document using your printer by choosing the *Print* menu option under the *File* tab (on the top left in Internet Explorer®) or *Print Preview* to review the selection before actually printing.
- You can also open the file on your own using software such as MS Word® and make changes to it before printing. You may want to add labels, comments, questions, or any other text. Keep in mind however that since you are opening an HTML file, some of your formatting options will be pre-set and may need to be changed. If you want more control over pictures within the word processing program, you'll probably want to take individual screen captures and import them one-by-one. Refer to chapter 16.0 - *Using Fire Studio 4.0 Outside of Fire Studio 4.0* for instructions on doing this.

- Finally, there are some important considerations to bear in mind when dealing with this HTML file. First, the file created is considered temporary by Fire Studio 4.0 and will be replaced the next time you use the *Print* button from the control panel. If you want to save this HTML file for later reference, there are two options available to you. One is to copy not only the HTML file itself, labeled *FireStudio.htm*, but also the *Images* folder located within the same *Report* folder. You will need to keep these two together for the HTML file to work properly. Your second option is to save the HTML under a new name from within Internet Explorer®. You can choose the *SaveAs* menu option located under the *File* tab on the top left (*Page* button in Internet Explorer ®7, figure 11.4e) to do this. This method will basically let you rename the file and folder, and then move them to wherever you want them saved. **If you separate the HTML file and the folder with the pictures, or put the HTML file *within* the associated folder, it will not work. Also, you must leave the *Images* folder intact for future printing.**

Figure 11.4e



With a little post-production work, you can easily put together a layout of the simulations, complete with notes and pictures, to use as a guide for yourself, or as a worksheet for evaluating students.

## MISCELLANEOUS REMARKS & ERRATA

- Screenshots will only be of a single window. If the student is viewing several windows at once (multiple view), the screenshot will only grab the active window. It might be a good idea to create a guide if the simulations your design will require multiple view.
- Clicking on the arrows under Slide ID will automatically update that user's information and the screenshot, unless you are in Selected Group Mode or All Users Mode. If you are ever in doubt regarding the current information displayed, use the Refresh Data button to get the latest update, or See Screen to get the latest screenshot.
- Simulations will need to be placed onto each Fire Studio computer prior to loading them. Communication Link cannot automatically send simulations to other computers. It is generally a good idea to place simulations in their own folder so students will be able to find them more easily. You may want to keep notes regarding where they are placed on the student computers so you can quickly find them, or even direct students to load them.
- The Commlink CD does not need to be in the computer during operation. Feel free to make a backup of the CD for safety. If you ever lose Commlink completely, contact Digital Combustion, Inc. to arrange a replacement. Communication Link 4.0 is a relatively small program and can also be sent via email.
- Communication Link is activated and deactivated across the internet using registered serial numbers. Be sure to have an active internet connection during both installation AND uninstallation. This will assure a quick and successful installation of the software, and allow you to move it to another computer if necessary.
- Communication Link does not need to be on a computer server. It can be installed on any computer on the network. Video is less of a priority on the Commlink system, so you may want to use the least powerful machine for running Commlink.
- A text log is kept of all text messages sent and received by Communication Link. You can find the *log.txt* file in your Commlink directory. This can be useful for evaluating student response after completing an exercise.
- If the Screenshot does not appear when you click the See Screen button, please ensure you have Read/Write Permission to the 'C:\Program Files\Digital Combustion, Inc\Fire Studio 4.0 Communication Link' folder and all subfolders within.

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You can contact us for technical support 5 days a week during regular business hours at our toll free number **1-800-884-8821**.

If you need to reach us after hours, you can email us at the appropriate address below:

General Information:	info@digitalcombustion.com
Sales:	sales@digitalcombustion.com
Tech Support:	support@digitalcombustion.com

Be sure to include your name, contact information, product version, and a description of the problem if you are sending a technical support related email.

Check our webpage periodically for updates to our Frequently Asked Questions page, as well as free downloadable add-ons to Fire Studio 4.0.

<http://www.digitalcombustion.com/>

If you need to send us a Purchase Order, you can fax it to us at **1-800-564-9101**, or mail it to the address below:

Digital Combustion, Inc.  
9121 Atlanta Ave. #705  
Huntington Beach, CA. 92646

Revised 11/10/11